

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 11127 220612Z

15

ACTION SMI-01

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCI-06 RSC-01 DRC-01 OMB-01

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R 220527Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6923

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DEPT PASS SMI FOR KENNEDY SCHMERTZ, OIA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OSCI, IN, BT

SUBJ: BHUTANESE ARTIFACTS FROM SMITHSONIAN

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM SENT ACTION NEW DELHI FROM CALCUTTA 20

SEPT '73 REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE

CALCUTTA 1769

SMI WAYNE MILLS AND POL KREISBERG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OSCI, IN, BT

SUBJ: BHUTANESE ARTIFACTS FROM SMITHSONIAN

1. GOVT OF INDIA FINAL EXPORT CLEARANCE FOR NINETEEN BOXES
OF SMITHSONIAN SHIPMENT RECEIVED SEPT 19.

2. IN LONG DISCUSSION SEPT 20 WITH CONGEN OFFICER BOTH
DIRECTOR OF BHUTAN STATE TRADING CORP (DAWA PENJORE) AND ASST
DIRECTOR OF BHUTAN CUSTOMS OFFICE, CALCUTTA (DORJE WANGDI)
PLEADED INABILITY TO RELEASE SECOND SHIPMENT OF FIVE
PARCELS WITHOUT RECEIPT OF YABLONSKY'S CUSTOMS ARREARS.

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 11127 220612Z

3. PENJORE HAS, AS HE AGREED TO DO DURING MILLS/BURLEIGH CONVERSATION WITH HIM SEPT 10, CABLED THIMPU (HRH NAMGYAL WANGCHUK) FOR AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE FIVE PARCELS EVEN WITHOUT YABLONSKY PAYMENT. HE HAS NOT RECEIVED REPLY--IN ABSENCE OF WHICH HE WILL NOT AUTHORIZE RELEASE OF PARCELS.

4. WE HAD THOUGHT, PENDING WORD FROM THIMPU ON FIVE PARCELS, TO GO AHEAD WITH SHIPMENT OF FOURTEEN PARCELS IN OUR POSSESSION. HOWEVER, WE NOW ARE INFORMED THAT, FOR INDIAN CLEARANCE PURPOSES, PARTIAL SHIPMENT WOULD RESULT IN REQUIREMENT TO CLEAR AGAIN THE BALANCE NOT SENT IN ORIGINAL SHIPMENT--A PROCESS WHICH AS YOU KNOW HAS TAKEN MONTHS.

5. DAWA PENJORE, ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE, HAS VOLUNTEERED TO RAISE MATTER WITH HRH NAMGYAL WANGCHUK DURING HIS FORTHCOMING (SEPT 28-OCT 11) TRIP TO THIMPU. HE IS OF OPINION THAT WITHOUT PERSONAL DISCUSSION, AUTHORIZATION WILL NOT BE FORTHCOMING FROM MINISTRY OF FINANCE. BOTH PENJORE AND WANGDI TOLD US INFORMALLY THAT CUSTOMS OFFICER IN THIMPU WHO ORIGINALLY RELEASED IMPORTED PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT TO YABLONSKY ON BASIS OF HER WRITTEN UNDERTAKING HAS "GOTTEN INTO TROUBLE" FOR THIS DECISION AS WELL AS THE OFFICER WHO RETURNED YABLONSKY'S PARTIAL PAYMENT CHECK. MORAL: THESE TWO GENTLEMEN ARE NOT GOING TO MAKE SAME MISTAKE. THERE IS NO ELEMENT HERE OF LACK OF DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL. BOTH THESE MEN HAVE AN EFFICIENT AND HELPFUL JOB IN EXPEDITING THE TRANSHIPMENT OF THE RIPLEY EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT (SEE CALCUTTA 1763).

6. OPTIONS: AS WE SEE IT THERE ARE THREE OPTIONS OPEN TO US AT THIS POINT: (1) WE CAN ASK PENJORE TO RAISE MATTER PERSONALLY WITH HRH (AS PER PARA 5); (2) RIPLEY CAN RAISE ISSUE WITH IMPORTANT BHUTANESE WHEN HE VISITS THE COUNTRY NEXT MONTH; OR (3) WE CAN PAY UP THE CUSTOMS--IF NECESSARY FROM SMITHSONIAN RUPEES. THE QUICKEST AND SUREST METHOD WOULD BE THE LAST.

7. COMMENT: THIS HAS BEEN SUCH A LONG DRAWN OUT AND DIFFICULT AFFAIR WITH SO MANY POSSIBLE PITFALLS AND PROBLEMS THAT IT SEEMS TO US TO BE IN EVERYONE'S INTEREST, NOT LEAST OF ALL THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S, TO WIND IT UP AS RAPIDLY AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 11127 220612Z

POSSIBLE. UNLESS WE DISCOVER ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS OF WHICH WE ARE NOT NOW AWARE, IT APPEARS THAT SWISS FRANCS 3172.40 (OR ITS DOLLAR OR INDIAN RUPEE EQUIVALENT) WOULD DO THE TRICK. CAN'T WE COME UP WITH IT? PICKERING

UNQUOTE
SCHNEIDER

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